

COMPUTER GURU

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Browsers

In January, Microsoft replaced its Edge browser with a new, improved Edge browser, so I thought it was time to write about browsers.

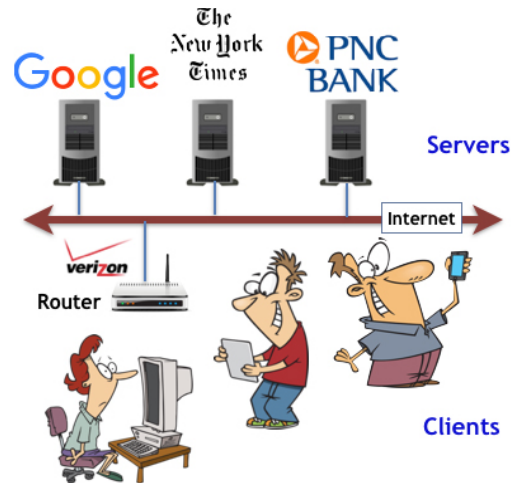
A **browser** is a program on your computer that downloads information from computers on the internet and renders that information in a form that you can read on your monitor, tablet, or mobile phone. The computers that provide the information are called “servers,” and your devices are “clients.” (See diagram on right.)

The network of servers comprises the World Wide Web (or “the cloud”), and the information they provide you are web pages. Web pages can include text, pictures, videos, and—very importantly—**links to other web pages**. If you’re reading *The New York Times* online, looking up a recipe for kreplach on Google, or paying your bills online, you’re using a browser to view web pages.

Windows 10 includes two browsers: A newly refurbished **Microsoft Edge** and the venerable **Internet Explorer**, which has become long in the tooth and may no longer render web pages correctly. Apple bundles its **Safari** browser with its MacBook computers, iPads, and iPhones. Many folks have installed **Chrome** on their Windows and Apple computers probably because of the popularity of Google’s Gmail or because someone told them that Chrome is better. Android tablets and phones include Google’s **Chrome** browser because Google owns the Android operating system.

All browsers do the same thing, and it usually doesn’t matter which browser you use. Any modern browser will work with Google, Gmail, and the Google web applications. Microsoft’s newly remodeled Edge browser now incorporates the same underpinnings as Chrome and is well integrated with Windows 10.

Safari is an excellent browser that is closely tied to Apple’s MacBook, iPad, and iPhone software. **Firefox browser**, which is available for MacBook and Windows computers, is a product of the nonprofit Mozilla corporation, which stresses privacy.



Recommendations

If you’re a Windows user concerned about privacy, then you should consider Firefox as your default browser. The Mozilla Group, which keeps Firefox up to date, is private and doesn’t track what you’re doing on the web. Or you can try out the new version of Microsoft’s Edge. You can copy your bookmarks from one browser to the next, so switching is simple. Microsoft is no longer adding features to Internet Explorer and I suggest you not use it.

MacBook users should stay with Safari. It’s an excellent browser, and integrates nicely with other Apple devices, like the iPhone and iPad. Keeping your MacBook operating system up to date will keep Safari up to date as well.

If you need help with your browser, visit the PSRC Tech Lab on Tuesdays from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Wednesdays from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., or Fridays from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.